GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1686
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2008
DEVELOPMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY
Athawale Shri Ramdas

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate any concrete action plan for the development of bio-technology in the country;

(b) if so, details thereof ;

(c) whether the development of bio-technology will facilitate the study and research works in the field of agri-gene in the country;

(d) if so, details thereof ; and

(e) the details regarding the total number of agri-genes available so far in the country including those genes on which research work is being carried out?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) & (b): Yes Sir. The Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology formulated a National Biotechnology Development Strategy. This strategy was based on 2 years long National and international consultation; review and comments from medical, agricultural, veterinary and environment experts, scientists, industry, regulators and all other ministries and departments. Various actions and programmes of this strategy have been suitably integrated while formulating the 11th Five Year Plan proposals to facilitate implementation. The strategy envisages major expansion in human resource development; industrial R&D promotion and development through public-private partnerships; sectoral R&D for technology development particularly in health care and agriculture; streamlining of regulatory system; and establishment of new institutes and infrastructure in cutting edge areas of biotechnology. Detailed strategy document is available at www.dbtindia.nic.in for further information.

(c), (d) & (e): Yes Sir. Under the Biotechnology Development Strategy, a major emphasis has been given to facilitate research and development of agri- biotechnology. In addition to on-going programmes on agricultural crop improvement through genetic engineering and molecular/gene assisted breeding, it envisages setting up of National Institute of Agri-Food Biotechnology and launching of grand challenge programmes for bio-prospecting and utilisation of useful genes. Already, several hundred genes have been isolated in various government-funded projects involving genome sequencing and functional genomics of crop plants and wild biodiversity. Genes important in pest and disease resistance, nutrition and productivity improvement are being utilized for research work on cereals, pulses and oilseeds. Detailed information is available at www.igmoris.nic.in